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Science and Superstition.

Superstition, deeply rooted
In the human heart and mind,
Must by reason be refuted,
Men no longer should be blind;
They have been the slaves of error,
Overawed by wildest terror.

Mysteries have long deluded
Millions of the human race,
Fraud and falsehood long have brooded
Over nature's radiant face;
We must seek with firm reliance
In her breast the truth of science.

Science is the noblest teacher,
Benefactress of mankind;
Reason is her gifted preacher,
Elevated and refined;
Raising our best thoughts and feelings
With beneficent revealings.

Let our spirits be aspiring
With the ardent love of truth,
Glorious purposes admiring,
Glowing from our early youth:
Superstition, in due season,
Will give way to human reason.

Moral Courage Makes Heroes.

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

An "old soldier" is reported to have talked in this style:

"I would like to let young men know that courage, like almost any other attribute can be acquired. I would like to let them know this because there are some poor fellows who are brought into the world with a timid nature that causes them much suffering. While having an admiration for brave men, they feel that they are cowards, and, accustoming themselves to this belief, they never attempt to fight against their weakness. Do you know, I really believe that most of the noted brave men of the world have become brave simply by systematically overcoming cowardice. Did not Launes, Napoleon's most dashing general, say, 'The man who says he never felt fear is a poltroon and a liar.' But while Launes thus acknowledged to the sensation of fear, he never allowed himself to show it; and that is the point. Moreover, by practice such things become easy."

This "old soldier" says that if a man is a coward and wishes to become brave he should make up his mind first of all that it is better to suffer death than to be trampled upon or to be humiliated. If you are unjustly assailed, he says, you should throw yourself upon your antagonist "with a vim and punch hard", feeling that it is better to die than to be regarded as a coward or to suffer humiliation.

A man does not make his own nature, and whether he shall be a brave man or a coward does not depend upon his own decision. Environment and heredity through ages have made creatures courageous or timid. Inheritance, to a large extent, and surroundings from childhood determine a man's fear or fearlessness in the presence of danger. There is no moral quality

in mere combativeness, in a disposition to fight for the sake of fighting, and this men and nations outgrow in proportion as they become enlightened and the necessity for maintaining the fighting spirit and attitude ceases to exist.

What "an old soldier's" words really mean to commend is moral courage, although they do not distinguish this from ordinary fearlessness and readiness to fight. Moral courage is that quality which makes even those who are physically weak and ordinarily timid, ready to face danger and sacrifice life itself for the right. Moral courage makes heroes and martyrs. It nerves the delicate woman to endure hardships and perils and to make sacrifices from which most persons without devotion to some principle and purpose deemed high and noble, would instinctively shrink.

Soldiers when they go into battle, are in proportion as reason and reflection still hold sway amid the excitement, conscious of danger and the chances of falling dead or wounded. The consciousness of such danger is accompanied by more or less fear. After awhile the ear becomes accustomed to the whistling of bullets, the roar of cannon, the bursting of shells, and the eye in like manner becomes familiar with the sight of comrades dead and dying, but the soldier who remains cool and self-possessed amid the noise and smoke of battle does not cease to realize that his life is in peril.

For this very reason the man with moral courage and self-respect makes a better soldier than does the man who is destitute of these qualities. Moral courage and pride keep soldiers in the ranks when mere physical courage would not restrain them from going to the rear. Soldiers who have true pride are thereby impelled to act in a way to command their own respect as well as the approval of their fellows. Though they shake with fear they will stand firm in their places, dying rather than turn their backs to the enemy. They prefer death to disgrace. It is easier for them to remain in the fight than to leave it. The shame, the reproach, the humiliation of failing their country in the supreme moment of its need, is too great to incur, even though they can thereby escape death. This is the way a self-respecting man feels when the instinct of self-preservation would, but for his pride, make his legs take him, if possible, out of danger.

Moral courage can be cultivated and strengthened by moral discipline and action, such as the lives of many men and women demand. It is fortified and increased in youth by example and precept. It is encouraged by knowledge of the great shining characters of the race and by the contemplation of those deeds which make the blood of the student of history tingle with admiration as he reads of them.

Strength, health, physical endurance, acquaintance with hardships and experience in battle are necessary to make the most effective soldiers. Moral qualities cannot take the place of these advantages, but they add to them and are necessary to make the highest type of soldier, such as is possible where there is intelligence, a principle or a sentiment to fight for and moral enthusiasm or religious fervor to unite men closely for a common purpose.

The idea that toughs and roughs, bullies and prizefighters make the best soldiers was completely exploded in our late civil war. The veterans who survive know that the names of such men helped to fill the companies to the maximum strength and to increase the pay roll, but they constituted an element of weakness rather than of strength. They were in the guard house, or on the sick list, or in military prison, or among deserters, or regarded as untrustworthy, or for some other reason off duty most of the time and generally absent without leave when a battle was to begin. The men who made our best volunteer soldiers were the men who had been good citizens, good members of society, business men, mechanics, farmers, workmen of all classes, who left their homes with the patriotic desire to help preserve the union and to keep the flag flying over all the states.

I had nearly four years of active military service as an enlisted man and as an officer, with opportunities for seeing many kinds of men before and during action, and what I write is the result of personal observation.

The esteem which so many people have for the "spiritual substance", appears to result from the impossibility they find in defining it in an intelligible way. The contempt which our metaphysicians show for matter, comes from the fact that "familiarity breeds contempt". When they tell us that the soul is more excellent and noble than the body, they tell us nothing, except that what they know nothing about must be more beautiful than that of which they have some faint ideas.—[Meslier.]

Ancient and Modern Miracles.

BY JEAN MESLIER.

If our Christ-worshippers assert that their saints had the power to raise the dead, . . . the Pagans had said before them . . . that Esculapius, son of Apollo, had raised the dead, and, among others, he brought to life Hyppolites, son of Theseus, by Diana's request.

If the Christ-worshippers pretend that several of their saints' bodies were miraculously saved from decomposition after death, and that they were found by divine revelation, after having been lost for a long time, the Pagans say the same of the body of Orestes, which they pretended to have found through an oracle.

If our Christ-worshippers claim that several of their saints continued to speak after losing the head, or having the tongue cut out, the Pagans claim that the head of Gambeinus recited a long poem after separation from his body.

If our Christ-worshippers claim that several of their saints were miraculously preserved in the flames without receiving any injury to their bodies or their clothing, the Pagans claim that the holy women of the Temple of Diana walked upon burning coals barefooted without burning or hurting their feet, and that the priests of the Goddess Feronie and of Herpicus walked in the same way upon burning coals in the fires which were made in honor of Apollo.

If Moses forced a stream of water to flow from a rock by striking it with his staff, the horse of Pegasus did the same: by striking a rock with his foot a fountain issued.

Finally, to abbreviate, because we could report many others, if our Christ-worshippers pretend that the walls of Jericho fell by the sound of their trumpets, the Pagans say that the walls of the city of Thebes were built by the sound of the musical instruments of Amphion; the stones, as the poets say, arranging themselves to the sweetness of his harmony. This would be much more miraculous and more admirable than to see the walls demolished.

There is certainly a great similarity between the Pagan miracles and our own. As it would be great folly to give credence to these pretended miracles of Paganism, it is not any the less so to have faith in those of Christianity, because they all come from the same source of error.